

MINUTES
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
9:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 7, 2009
Indiana State Library
History Reference Room #211
140 N. Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Members in Attendance:

Nola Gentry
Bob Eddleman
Jim Cherry
Larry Clemens
Bill Mann
Warren Baird

Jim Lake, ISDA
Jerry Hartley, ISDA
Tara Henry, ISDA
Laura Fribley, ISDA
Scott Ham, Silver Creek Water Corp.
Brett Glick, Bartholomew SWCD
Robert Woodling, Monroe SWCD
Darrell Nicholson, NRCS
MaryLou Renshaw, IDEM
Gary Langell, IDNR
Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD
Paula Baldwin, IASWCD
Janice Bullman, IASWCD

Others in Attendance:

Jerod Chew, ISDA
Deb Fairhurst, ISDA
Sara Slater-Atwater, ISDA
Kelly Gentry, ISDA
Paul Hoffman, ISDA

- I. 9:06 AM: Call to Order**
- II. Draft Minutes of April 2009**

Warren Baird moved to approve the minutes as presented. Bill Mann seconded and the motion carried.

Nola Gentry asked if the notes from the June SSCB meeting could be posted to the website. Kelly Gentry said she would make sure they got posted later this week.

III. Clean Water Indiana Programs/Initiatives

a. CREP Update – Sara Slater-Atwater – See Attachment

Slater-Atwater mentioned the Technical and Steering Committees have met. They are working on establishing priority areas and practices and creating better marketing tools for state and local levels. She also stated the public notice for the CREP amendment closed on June 30th.

b. Clean Water Indiana Grants – Paul Hoffman – See Attachment

Discussion followed on the District Training Incentive. Larry Clemens asked when the deadline was for District Training. Hoffman replied June 15th. N. Gentry wanted to reiterate over \$18K remain from the 2008 District Training. Clemens also pointed out over \$16K remain from the 2006 District Training. Jim Lake stated DSSs worked with the districts on getting them to turn in their District Training receipts, but some failed to do so. We need to start making deadlines final.

More discussion followed on enforcing deadlines and setting penalties.

i. ECAP Status Report – Sara Slater-Atwater – See Attachment

ii. Conservation Consulting Initiative Report – Sara Slater-Atwater

Slater-Atwater reported CCI contracts expired June 30th. Over 10,000 acres were reached through this incentive. We are still waiting for 2 districts to submit their report. There will be approximately \$60K that will be left over.

c. Clean Water Indiana Update – Jerod Chew

Chew gave a short review of ECAP and suggested to the board to have committee meetings before their next board meeting to decide what to do with the ECAP extensions and how to utilize the remaining funds. Chew also stated later today Baird will give a CCI update and recommendation.

Chew reported CWI has been appropriated just over \$3.6M that approximately a 5% reserve on that amount is expected. This would leave approximately \$3.4M to work with in CWI. Simply for reference roughly the traditional expenditures for the CWI Fund have been budgeted in following manner: \$1.2M for staff, \$600,000 committed to CREP, \$920,000 for the 1:1 match as outlined in statute, grants and training incentives to districts approximately \$400,000, and then the remaining funds have been used for general support and special projects. Examples would include: SSCB support of per diem, mileage, registrations and travel; CREP DVD; Leadership Institute, etc.

Clemens asked how much money from the past fiscal year gets carried over to this year. Chew stated that he does not have those numbers with him and this can be a complicated answer due to the encumbering process for ensuring that funds are utilized by the entity, such as SWCD, as opposed to reverting back to the Cigarette Tax Fund. He stated that this should not be as much of a concern with the cleaning up of the CWI law which should result in the CWI fund being treated as a truly non- reverting fund. Funds should roll back to Clean Water Indiana and can be requested for other purposes. To answer your question, of what was paid or encumbered in fiscal year 2008-2009 I believe it was under \$200,000. This is actually good because what should be set aside for CREP is low and this will help to replenish those funds.

More discussion on how funds are swept vs. put back in general fund vs. kept for that district and explanation of the state's accounting processes. Chew explained that many of the funding agreements were crafted in a way to reduce the opportunity for funds to be swept.

Robert Woodling asked if there is potential to change the way that funds have been encumbered to SWCDs to make the accounting easier. Chew replied yes, I believe that we have that flexibility.

Jim Lake stated he has been working with districts to be more accountable. He suggested if funds are not used then they need be swept back to the CWI fund and reallocated to another district. We would be sending the wrong message to districts if we let them reallocate funds because they could not execute the intent of the original grant.

Chew also reported that CWI was appropriated an additional \$500,000 per year from the state general fund. Chew stated that at this time we do not know how these funds are accessed or if they are to be used only in specific ways. In the previous budget these funds were appropriated but a 100% reserve was held on these funds, therefore they were not allotted for use.

d. Technical Support Update – Jerod Chew

Chew mentioned we are short 2 RS Team Leaders, one in the NW region and the other in the CSE region.

He also reported from the weekly conservation survey our technical staff completes, we have reached an approximately 120-150 landowners and 4500 acres per week. This past week we reached 118 farmers and over 4900 acres. A majority of the activities they work on include design, survey and general technical assistance. This report is a snapshot of the work occurring by our field staff during the one week period.

e. District Support Update – Jerod Chew – See Attachment

Chew reported Ken Eck's last day with ISDA was June 30th. He will be working for Purdue Extension Service as an Extension Educator in Dubois County. We thank him for his many years of service and wish him all the best.

Jerry Hartley will soon be joining the technical team bringing our DSS count down to four. We see a great need to maintain at least 5 DSSs. Our goal would be to have eight DSSs, but understand that with our budget concerns and limitations on hiring it will be awhile, if at all.

Chew explained with 4-5 DSSs it will be hard to visit districts and attend board meetings as SWCDs may be used to due to time zone changes and immense amount of travel involved. We will be communicating with districts soon about the temporary DSS regions. Until we can hire another DSS, we will be encouraging districts to still contact their DSS even if they can not make a personal visit. DSSs will be available as needed for assistance requests. N. Gentry asked Jennifer Boyle and Paula Baldwin to help communicate with districts about the change and to call their DSS even if they can not physically be there. Jim Lake mentioned most DSS have their blackberries handy in the evenings if districts call during a meeting with questions.

More discussion followed on the temporary layout of DSS regions.

IV. Soil and Water Conservation Request

a. Supervisor Requests – Kelly Gentry

Dearborn County – See Attachment

Bob Eddleman moved to approve the Dearborn County temporary appointment request. Jim Cherry seconded and the motion carried.

b. CWI Grants Requests – Paul Hoffman

Dubois County CMIG Request– See Attachment

Eddleman moved to approve the Dubois County CMIG extension request. Cherry seconded and the motion carried.

Monroe County CMIG Request– See Attachment

N. Gentry stated since the deadline for CMIG has passed they will need to vote on an extension if the reallocation request passes. Robert Woodling said an extension until the end of August 2009 would be sufficient. Eddleman mentioned this request is still with in the original intent of the marketing grant. Purchasing signage is still a form of marketing.

Cherry moved to approve the Monroe County CMIG reallocation request. Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.

Cherry moved to approve the Monroe County CMIG extension request until August 31, 2009. Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.

Clark County SNRG Request– See Attachment

Clemens stated he did not feel this was a good use of state dollars. Eddleman also mentioned if approved this would send the wrong message that we would change any grant if they send us a request.

Cherry moved to deny the Clark County SNRG reallocation request. Clemens seconded and the motion carried.

Elkhart County SNRG Request– See Attachment

Eddleman moved to approve the Elkhart County SNRG extension request. Mann approved and the motion carried.

Jefferson County SNRG Request– See Attachment

Eddleman stated this is the same type of request as Clark County.

Eddleman moved to deny the Jefferson County SNRG reallocation request. Cherry seconded and the motion carried.

Newton County SNRG Request– See Attachment

Cherry moved to approve the Newton County SNRG extension request until December 31, 2010. Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.

Posey County SNRG Request – See Attachment

Mann moved to approve the Posey County SNRG reallocation request. Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.

ECAP Extension Requests – See Attachments

Chew recommended to the board to approve those request that have all of their funds allocated. He also recommended the board consider recommitting ECAP funds to other counties such as Jackson County who have indicated that they have projects ready to fund. As an example of why particularly Jackson is a good candidate, their second half of ECAP funds was swept because they were short obligating \$400. Jackson County was concerned on obligating any more funds because they had not yet received any of their ECAP funds and their \$10,000 match dollars were accidentally sent to the Solid Waste District at that time. They were unfortunately victims of some accounting mistakes on the state level.

Eddleman suggested give authority to the Grants Committee and ISDA-DSC administration to review the ECAP extension requests a make a decision based on each request.

N. Gentry felt confident in approving several requests today that stated in their letter all ECAP funds have been allocated. Those requests include Bartholomew, Clay, Lawrence, Martin, Parke, Posey, Putnam, Vigo and Washington. N. Gentry suggested the Grants Committee go through the remaining requests and make a decision on those based if they have all of their funds allocated. She asked the Division staff to help track down those remaining districts to find out if their funds are allocated.

Tara Henry stated Decatur County had a board meeting last night and they are sending in an ECAP extension request later this week. She states all of their ECAP funds have been allocated.

N. Gentry decided to go ahead and add Decatur County to the list of request to approve today. She suggested any other extension requests that come in before the September 1st deadline and have allocated all of their funds to be extended to December 31, 2009.

Cherry moved to approve the ECAP extension request for Bartholomew, Clay, Decatur, Lawrence, Martin, Parke, Posey, Putnam, Vigo and Washing Counties with a deadline of December 31, 2009. Remaining requests will be reviewed by the CWI Grants Committee once determined if all funds have been allocated. Any additional ECAP extension request that come in prior to the September 1, 2009 deadline will automatically be approved if all funds have been allocated. Any funds remaining will be reallocated to additional ECAP counties that requested additional funding. Eddleman seconded. Discussion followed and the motion carried.

V. SSCB Board Reports and Discussion

a. SSCB Chairman's Report – Nola Gentry

N. Gentry extended thanks on behalf of the SSCB to Kosciusko again for last month's meeting and tour.

N. Gentry also mentioned following this morning portion of the meeting the board will recess for lunch then meet again at ISDA to brainstorm on the SSCB business plan and future of CWI funding.

She also mentioned she, along with Warren Baird, attended ISDA's Strategic Plan roll out at Kelsey's Dairy Farm.

b. SSCB Sub-Committee Reports and Recommendations

i. Executive Committee Report and Recommendations – Nola Gentry

N. Gentry reported the ICP leaders met last week to discuss webinar training. There was a statewide conservation webinar training on July 2nd. Nearly 90 sites participated in this webinar training. The official statewide conservation and partnership webinar will take place on July 23rd. Through this webinar you can record sessions and load presentations and add hotlinks.

ii. CWI Grants Committee Report and Recommendations – Warren Baird

1. Conservation Consulting Initiative – See Attachment

Slater-Atwater commented the CCI program has merit, but could be rolled out differently. She suggested more training. Baird suggested collecting feedback before doing another program like this. Not every program can be successful.

Clemens asked to clarify when the deadline was for CCI and how much was not spent. Slater-Atwater stated the CCI program ended June 30th and there is approximately \$60K unspent.

More discussion followed on the CCI program.

Eddleman moved to approve the recommendation of the CWI Grants Committee to end the Conservation Consulting Initiative program and redirect unused funds to the Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative positing. Clemens seconded and the motion carried.

iii. District Capacity Committee Report and Recommendations – Bob Eddleman – No Report

VI. ISDA Report – Jerod Chew

a. ISDA Strategic Update – See Attachment

Chew highlighted components of the Strategic Update.

The ISDA Strategic Plan can also be found on the ISDA website:

<http://www.in.gov/isda/2539.htm>

b. Division of Soil Report

Chew reported the Red Gold Stewardship Award applications are in and ready to be picked up for review. The winners will be announced during Red Gold's annual grower's field day on July 28th.

Chew also reported that Indiana has been selected as a pilot state for a training program from NASCA (National Association of Conservation Agencies). They will work with Indiana on developing a training program based on the success of other states. This training program will be aimed at creating a training program for Indiana's technical staff: SWCD, state, federal, etc.

Chew asked Jim Lake to give an update on WLEB. Lake reported that he and Jerod participated in a special meeting on the Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB) hosted by Congresswomen Marci Kaptur who represents the Toledo area. Congressman Souder who represents nearly the entire Indiana portion of the WLEB and couple of other

congressional representatives from within the WLEB from Ohio and Michigan participated as well. Both Congresswomen Kaptur and Congressman Souder expressed concern about continuing flooding and water quality problems and requested that the representatives at the meeting from all three of the states provide them with a list of priority high impact land treatment practices and costs that could be implemented within a couple of years should special funding be appropriated for the Great Lakes. The Indiana group that attended the meeting will be getting together on July 9 to draft some ideas before the three states meet jointly to prepare an idea. Practices that will most likely be recommended include flood plan easements, WRP and 2 stage ditches.

VII. Conservation Partner Reports

- a. **DNR Report – Gary Langel –**
- b. **IDEM Report – Marylou Renshaw –** See Attachment
- c. **Purdue Report – Gary Steinhardt –** No Report
- d. **IASWCD President’s Report – Paula Baldwin**
Baldwin announced IASWCD has a new conservation development specialist, Janice Bullman. She also mentioned several vacant volunteer positions are available for the Pathway to Water Quality during the state fair. You can sign up by going to IASWCD’s website. Please refer to IASWCD’s weekly update for additional news.
- e. **Farm Services Agency Report – Gail Peas –** No Report
- f. **NRCS State Conservationist’s Report – Jane Hardisty –** See Attachment

VIII. Public Comment – No Comments

IX. Next Meeting:

The next State Soil Conservation Board meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 8th at 9:00 a.m. at the Indiana State Library. Sub-Committees will meet sometime in August.

The SSCB concluded the morning portion of the meeting at 11:40 a.m. They took a short recess and reconvened at 12:30 p.m. at ISDA to continue the planning process of the future of CWI programs.

X. Clean Water Indiana Planning Process

A facilitated planning session followed where small workgroups of SSCB members and DSSs brainstormed about CREP, District Capacity and Technical Assistance.

XI. Meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.